

WHAT'S *New*

in the Metropolitan Police Department



*A weekly update for residents, visitors,
and workers in the District of Columbia*

Friday, May 27, 2005

PHOTO RADAR SHOWS CONTINUED PROGRESS, AS MPDC LOOKS TO EXPAND TRAFFIC SAFETY PROGRAM

Aggressive speeding in DC's photo radar enforcement zones remained a record low rate during April, with just 3.1 percent of all vehicles monitored by photo radar found to be speeding aggressively. This was the same as the aggressive speeding rate in March 2005. By comparison, the aggressive speeding rate was 31 percent in July 2001 (initial warning period) and 25.5 percent in August 2001 (first month of ticketing). Since the summer of 2001, aggressive speeding on DC roadways monitored by photo radar has been dramatically reduced—from almost 1 in 3 motorists speeding aggressively at the beginning of the program to about 1 in 30 motorists in recent months. Of the more than 1.1 million vehicles that passed through photo radar enforcement zones during April 2005, fewer than 35,000 were found to be speeding aggressively. In April 2002, by contrast, there were only 465,000 vehicles monitored by photo radar, but nearly 52,000 violators detected, for an aggressive speeding rate of nearly 11 percent. Average speeds on all DC roadways—residential streets, arteries and highways—remain substantially lower today than they were when the program began almost four years ago. On streets with a 25-mph speed limit, the average speed of all vehicles monitored by photo radar reached a record low of 24.9 mph in April 2005—down from 35.5 mph in July 2001.

MPDC PLANS NEW, CONSOLIDATED TRAFFIC SAFETY EFFORT

While DC's traffic fatalities continue to decline, the MPDC is working to enhance traffic safety even more. At the direction of Chief Ramsey, the Department is in the process of consolidating a variety of functions pertaining to traffic into a new Traffic Safety Unit. Captain Patrick Burke, a well known expert on traffic safety issues, has been tasked with developing and implementing a detailed plan for the new traffic safety effort, which will be rolled out in the coming weeks. The idea is to bring together many of the Department's citywide prevention, inspection and enforcement initiatives, with the goal of enhancing coordination of traffic safety in DC. The functions planned for the new unit include major crash investigations, traffic safety and prevention, automated traffic enforcement, motor carrier inspections and impaired driver enforcement support. This consolidation will enhance coordination on traffic safety with the District Department of Transportation (DDOT), the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and other local, regional and federal partners. Even after the new unit is created, individual police districts will continue to be responsible for day-to-day traffic enforcement in their neighborhoods, but they will have the added support of a centralized unit. More details on the new effort will be announced in the coming weeks.

- ① For more information, visit:
http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1240,Q,547970,mpdcNav_GID,1552,mpdcNav,1,.asp
- ① The new results come as the MPDC announces the latest expansion of its automated traffic enforcement program. In the coming weeks, 11 additional red-light cameras, five more stationary photo radar cameras, and two work zone vans will be activated. The specific locations and warning periods for each new application will be announced prior to its activation.
- ① For the latest results on DC's red-light camera initiative, go to:
http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1240,Q,547886,mpdcNav_GID,1552,mpdcNav,1,.asp
- ① As of May 27, traffic fatalities in DC are down 20 percent when compared with the same period of 2004. This follows a 35 percent reduction in fatalities between 2003 and 2004. Get updated fatality statistics at:
http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1240,q,548138,mpdcNav_GID,1552,mpdcNav,1,.asp

DETECTIVES INVESTIGATING A SERIES OF TAXICAB ROBBERIES

The MPDC is seeking the public's assistance in attempting to identify the suspects who may be responsible for a series of more than a dozen taxicab robberies in the District. The first of the robberies occurred in December 2004; the most recent on May 24. In all, 13 robberies of taxicabs have been reported. All of the robberies have occurred in the Fourth District, with the exception of one which occurred in the Third District. At this time, there is no conclusive evidence that any of these offenses are linked. However, investigators are looking at any similarities as part of their ongoing investigation. In each of these cases, the cab drivers picked up a passenger or passengers at various locations, and the passengers subsequently robbed the drivers. In many of the cases, handguns or other weapons were displayed. In others, force was used during the commission of the robberies. Anyone with information about these cases is asked to contact the MPDC's Command Center at (202) 727-9099 or the Department's Crime Solvers Unit at 1-800-673-2777. Callers to Crime Solvers can remain anonymous, and if a tip results in an arrest and indictment, the caller is eligible for a reward of up to \$1,000.

MPDC DISCUSSES DETAILS OF NEW SCHOOL SECURITY CONTRACT

During a DC Council hearing this week, representatives of the MPDC discussed additional details of the new school security contract that the Department will be managing, pending Council approval. A new DC law transfers management responsibility for school safety to the MPDC, effective July 1. School safety plans call for the continued use of contract security personnel in the schools, but under a new contract managed by the MPDC and with new reforms designed to enhance the quality of security services. For example, the contract sets higher standards for the selection and training of school security personnel. It establishes minimum training requirements for all security personnel working in the schools. The contract also requires the vendor to administer a test of basic security skills (proctored by the MPDC), and to retrain all personnel who do not pass the test. Any guard who does not pass the test the second time will not be allowed to continue working on the contract. In addition, the contract establishes integrity and performance standards for personnel, including pre-employment and random drug screening. In an attempt to attract and retain a more mature and professional guard force, the selected vendor is proposing to pay the guards approximately \$1 more an hour than guards are paid under the current contract. The MPDC told the Council that the RFP for the school security contract was developed with strong input from the community, including a community advisory panel convened during the procurement process. In response to community concerns, the contract states that the vendor is to follow the security policies and procedures provided by the MPDC and formulated in partnership with DCPS. In addition, the uniform requirement was changed from the current "soft look" of coat and tie to the "hard look" of a traditional security uniform with patches and a badge.

NEWS & NOTES

Hearing on Omnibus Public Safety Act. Chief Ramsey is among those scheduled to testify on May 31 at a DC Council Committee on the Judiciary hearing on Mayor's Williams's proposed "Omnibus Public Safety Act of 2005." The Act provides for a number of new tools for police and prosecutors in such critical areas as gun violence, juvenile crime, quality-of-life problems and officer safety.

Click It or Ticket. As summer approaches, drivers are reminded to buckle up themselves and their passengers. The MPDC is participating in the regional "Click It or Ticket" campaign, with enhanced enforcement planned through June 5. Details at <http://app.mpd.cdc.gov/newsroom/newsroom.asp?sid=3205>.

New RFK Parking Plan. The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) has announced revisions to the RFK Parking Policy for events at the Stadium. The revisions, to go into effect in June 2005, are intended to increase understanding, convenience and enforceability while encouraging Metro use. Details at http://ddot.dc.gov/ddot/cwp/view,a,1252,q,627861,ddotNav_GID,1610.

① For more information about the taxicab robberies, including specific dates, locations and methods, go to:
<http://app.mpd.cdc.gov/newsroom/newsroom.asp?sid=3202>

① To find out more about Crime Solvers, visit:
http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1243,q,544778,mpdcNav_GID,1533.asp

① Read the MPDC's full testimony before the Council at:
http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1247,q,557098,mpdcNav_GID,1543.asp

DATA BOX

Homicides as of 5/27/05

- ◆ 2005: 65
- ◆ 2004: 80
- ◆ % Change: -18.9%
- ◆ Closure Rate: 56.9% (37 closures)

Adult Arrests week end. 5/21/05

- ◆ Total: 992
- ◆ Drugs: 157
- ◆ Weapons: 23
- ◆ Motor Vehicle Theft: 12
- ◆ Prostitution/Sex Offenses: 31

Juvenile Activity week end. 5/21/05

- ◆ Arrests: 39
- ◆ Curfew Violations: 25
- ◆ Truants: 105

Firearm Recoveries as of 5/25/05

- ◆ May: 160
- ◆ 2005 Total: 1,033

Traffic Fatalities as of 5/27/05

- ◆ 2005: 20
- ◆ 2004: 25
- ◆ % Change: -20.0%

Information, ideas, or comments about this service? Send an e-mail to **KEVIN MORISON**, MPDC's Director of Corporate Communications, at kevin.morison@dc.gov. Would you like to have this information e-mailed to you? Just go to our Website and register with **Crimereports.com**.

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